

# We Need Transformation not a Balancing Act

*Looking critically at the ANC Discussion Document*

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**Blade Nzimande** (SACP Deputy Chairperson and ANC NWC member) and **Jeremy Cronin** (SACP Deputy General Secretary and ANC NEC member) critique the ANC discussion document. They argue that the document represents a serious back-sliding, in which the goals of transformation are forgotten in a narrow-minded pursuit of stability at all costs.

The last months of 1996 produced a number of strategic stock-taking documents from within our movement. The timing of this batch of documents was not entirely accidental. The ANC-led government was half-way through its first term in office. Two-and-a-half years of governance had seen major changes in our country, but also many difficulties, some foreseen and others unforeseen. Across our alliance there was a sense that we had accumulated an experience that needed to be reflected upon.

The strategic documents included the SACP's Central Committee discussion document, *Let us not lose sight of our strategic priorities*; the ANC Youth League's *Organisational and leadership issues in the ANC*; an ANC discussion document, *The State and Social Transformation*; and COSATU's *A Draft Programme for the Alliance*.

There are some important convergences between all of these strategic discussion papers, but there are also some noteworthy differences, especially between the *State and Social Transformation* document and all the rest. It is to this ANC document that we wish to pay some attention. But first some observations which we believe should serve as a background to our critique.

## **A process of broad discussion under way**

The ANC's National Executive Committee's *Lekgotla*, held at the end of January this year (1997), has taken a formal resolution that the ANC, SACP and COSATU documents, referred to above, should now be actively debated and discussed within the ANC itself, in the run-up to the ANC National Conference in December this year. We obviously greatly welcome this decision.

Even before this decision, at the SACP Central Committee meeting in early December last year, comrade Thabo Mbeki, acting in his capacity as ANC Deputy President, presented the ANC discussion document to the CC. He engaged (and often agreed)

with many of the criticisms of the ANC paper that we will elaborate below. (Incidentally, while he played a role in some of its formulations, cde Mbeki is frequently, but inaccurately, labelled "the author" of the *State and Social Transformation* document.)

We mention all of these specific points to make one thing clear. While elements in the commercial media will, as always, present a debate on the ANC paper as "SACP (or COSATU) left-wing dissidence", we are, in fact, participating in a broad and necessary debate. Opinions and perspectives are not neatly delineated down organisational lines. Neither the SACP nor ANC documents are formally endorsed positions within our respective organisations. We cannot let the possibility of labelling block comradely debate.

## **Convergences**

We do not disagree with everything contained in the *State and Social Transformation* document. Indeed, its central theme is absolutely correct. The apartheid regime cynically endeavoured to prolong its own existence by constructing a bloated, colonial and neo-colonial-type state apparatus, built on racial welfarism for whites, and on collaborative, patronage networks for some strata among the black oppressed majority. The ANC paper documents this well, and makes a real contribution to our better understanding of it. Apartheid has now left us with an unworkable, deeply indebted and thoroughly corrupt bureaucratic legacy.

We also agree that, whatever the difficulties and shortcomings of the past three years, there have been important changes in our country, and we must not be shy to claim victories. Part of our opponents' agenda is to sow demoralisation and confusion.

On a more theoretical level, we agree with the ANC discussion paper that we cannot indulge in voluntarism, the illusion that everything is possible, and that all we need is sheer will power. We are seeking to transform our country but on a national, regional and international terrain that is not of our own choosing. This requires strategic renewal and creative thinking on our part. No-one is arguing that there are easy answers.

There are, however, some key issues which we believe are handled in a very weak or problematic way in the *State and Social Transformation* paper.

## **The role of the new democratic state**

The paper sees the role of the new democratic state as essentially "regulatory" (it uses this word a great deal). Or, put another way, it sees the new state as a mediator between different "interest groups" in society, and particularly between "capital" and "labour". For instance, in paragraph 6.1 it says:

"Labour, **just like** capital, stands at the centre of the creation of the material conditions which make it possible to continuously improve the conditions of life of the people as a whole"; and then it adds in 6.3: "This therefore has to mean that the working class together with the democratic state and capital complete the proverbial golden triangle necessary for the development and transformation of society". We have here a technician, "neutral" state, constituting the apex of a triangle, and equidistant from capital and labour.

This is a radical and curious shift from the ANC's [strategy and tactics document of 1994](#) which, capturing a very long tradition in the ANC, sees the working class as the leader of the national democratic revolution. The discussion paper perspective begs the very important question of how one reconciles the notion of a golden triangle, of both labour and capital standing equally at the centre of improving the conditions of life of the people, with the leadership of the working class and its allies over the national democratic revolution.

The discussion paper's mythical, class-less state also coincides with a very statist (or state centred) conception of the transformation tasks in front of us. Very little room is left for the active participation of other social forces. "1.1 The struggle for the social and economic transformation of the South African society **is essentially the task of replacing the Apartheid state with a democratic one.**"

There is a great deal that is profoundly troubling about this way of approaching our new democratic state, and it stands in marked contrast to the perspectives in the SACP and COSATU documents on the role of our new state. In these latter cases the state, it is argued, needs to play a much broader and more active role. These interventions call for a state that is "developmental", "active", and catalysing, as opposed to a state that is primarily regulatory in character.

Both the COSATU and SACP documents argue for a state that is actively "**aligned to a progressive/worker dominated movement** (which does not mean the South African developmental state should forego partnerships and interaction with capital)" (SACP, 4.1). At the heart of the COSATU document is an attempt to give concrete content to this alignment - COSATU proposes, and gives some detail on, a **Tripartite Alliance Reconstruction Accord**. (Incidentally, the ANC 1994 "Strategy and Tactics" document also clearly asserts the need for this kind of class alignment.)

Likewise, both the SACP and COSATU documents, and the ANC YL document, are highly critical of statist exaggerations over the last two-and-a-half years. COSATU criticises the way in which policy and implementation have been driven by individual ministries in a technocratic and atomised way. The COSATU document singles out government's macro-economic policy position, "Growth, Equity and Redistribution" (GEAR ), in particular, but it sees GEAR as only one among many such examples.

The idea of harnessing the combined force of state power and mobilised mass formations is completely foreign to the ANC document, but lies at the centre of how the other papers envisage the transformation effort.

### **Class realities in the new SA**

The ANC discussion document's slide into a technocratic, "class-neutral" approach to politics is partly based on its inability to think clearly about class realities in the new South Africa.

The document asserts that we "must ...seek to forge a democratic and equitable partnership...between labour and capital in the interest of social stability, economic progress, reconstruction and development. In the context of the South African situation, the ***tension between labour and capital demands special attention by the democratic state because it can easily be confused with...the national question.***"

Obviously, at a conceptual level, capitalist class exploitation (and that is what it is, not mere "tension") and racial oppression are not one and the same thing. However, the ANC document is not making a theoretical point in this passage, it is seeking, in practice, to isolate class struggle from the struggle to resolve the national question.

Is the document seriously asking us not to be "confused" by the suspicion that the present powers of capitalists in our country have something to do with massive colonial land dispossession, the imposition of pass laws on African workers, the outlawing of non-racial trade unions, or the racist expropriation of African, Coloured and Indian small businesses? Can we advance, deepen and defend the national democratic revolution without connecting, in practice, class and national struggles? Do the April 1994 elections simply draw a veil over past capitalist accumulation, and its present consequences? Or should we now, in the "interest of social stability", just keep quiet about such matters?

Back in 1978, comrade Thabo Mbeki wrote: "Of the bourgeois countries, South Africa is unique to the extent that profit maximisation is the overt, unhidden and principal objective of state policy, and can therefore be regarded with respect to this characteristic as an almost perfect model of capitalism cleansed of everything that is superfluous to its essential characterisation; a model which displays to all, in their true nakedness, the inner motive forces of this social system and its fundamental inter-connections." (Mbeki, "The Historical Injustice", in *Selected Writings on the Freedom Charter, 1955-1985*, ANC, 1985).

We are not sure if national oppression in South Africa can be reduced simply to an essence: capitalist exploitation, as Mbeki is arguing in 1978. But he is right that there is a deep complicity between national oppression and class exploitation. They are "confused", in reality, with each other. This is surely a much better basis for

approaching our current realities, than the perspectives articulated in *"State and Social Transformation"*.

## Dealing with "capital"

Directly related to this in the ANC discussion document is the curious and confusing way in which it uses the concept "capital". It constantly slides between:

1. "capital" - meaning factors of production - financial resources, raw materials, machinery, land, etc.; and
2. "capital" - meaning capitalists, a small but powerful class of private owners of many of the above factors of production, who use this private ownership to appropriate the product of other peoples' labour.

This slide between the two ways of using the word "capital" is very transparent in paragraph 5.14: "For their part, it should be acknowledged, these private owners are driven by the requirement continuously to reproduce and increase the volume of capital [sense number one] in their hands. They do this through the generation of profit, which is a fundamental condition for the existence of capital [sense number two]."

If you confuse these two things, then you may conclude from the trite observation noted above ("Labour, **just like** capital, stands at the centre of the creation of the material conditions..."), that we will always need capitalist parasites, private exploiters, because they are an essential part of production (along with land, machinery, raw materials and labour).

But capital, in the first sense of factors of production, does not have to be owned and controlled by a small group of exploiters. Despite the still persisting power of capitalists, very significant capital resources are in state or parastatal hands in our country at this very moment. If you fail to see this, then you are never going to ask how, as a democratic state and as a liberation movement, we are going to deploy this public capital. How do we strengthen this public capital, and weaken the purely profit-driven power of the capitalist class? And what about other forms of ownership of capital - trade union investment companies, or worker co-operatives?

Because of its confused understanding of "capital", the ANC document abandons transformation of existing power realities, and confines our democratic state to a regulatory role, overseeing "labour" and "capital", helping them to co-operate. The new democratic state becomes little more than an overgrown IMSSA (the Independent Mediation Service of SA).

## Removing class struggle

To talk of "capital" and "labour" simply as abstract, technical economic categories, as the discussion document tends to do, is to strip these categories of their class character. As if capital and labour were not social forces, shaped by a history of primary accumulation and dispossession, and reproduced in an ongoing way through exploitation and oppression. The depoliticisation of capital and labour obscures the class struggle that underpins the relationship, it obscures the unequal and exploitative relationship that characterises the interaction between the two.

The way in which the paper attempts to think the relationship between the democratic state and "capital" is, as a result of the above, mystifying: "the democratic state must establish a dialectical relationship with private capital as a social partner for development and social progress. The defining element is a working and harmonious, even at times, conflictual relationship between the democratic state and capital. It is a relationship which is necessarily complex and dialectical rather than simple and linear". (para. 5.16). In plain language what does that actually mean?

We are reminded of Marx's comment in *Capital* that "In its mystical form, dialectic became the fashion in Germany, because it seemed to glorify the existing state of things." All of this "non-linear" complexity in the democratic state's "dialectical" relationship with the class of capitalists serves to disguise the fact that there is no problematising of the capitalist class, no interest in its historic origins in the super-exploitation of black workers.

The paper polemically exhorts workers not to be "economistic", not to be "infantile" or "subjectivist". But it hardly prescribes to capitalists at all. The so-called golden triangle turns out to be worse than an illusion about class neutrality. No expectations, no pressures are placed on "capital".

## Role of the ANC

Given all of this, it should also hardly be surprising that the document is virtually silent about the ANC as a political movement (in and out of government). When, in paragraph 4.11.1.5 there is passing mention of popular mobilisation, this task is said to reside "within the trade unions" and also within some very vaguely specified "genuinely representative non-governmental popular organisations". The ANC does not feature!

The document occasionally mentions, in general terms, the importance of "participatory democracy" (4.11.1). But then it immediately says: "This is one of the central reasons why the democratic movement must resist the liberal concept of 'less government'". Yes, of course, we must resist the liberal concept of "less government", but how does that relate to the question of popular participation,

which seemed to be the subject of discussion at this point of the paper? The document raises the question of popular mobilisation, and then, before it can complete the thought, it retreats back into the technocratic state.

### **The Alliance and mass democratic movement**

Not only do the positions of the ANC discussion document lead to a silence on the role of the ANC as a political movement, they lead to an even greater incomprehension about the logic behind a tripartite alliance, and the need for an ANC-aligned broad mass democratic movement. If "regulating" "even-handedly" the relationship between labour and capitalists is the objective of the ANC-led state, then the ANC may as well have an alliance with Business South Africa along with COSATU. The ANC may as well relate to the Chamber of Mines or the Transvaal Agricultural Union as it would to SANCO, or SAAPAWU.

This is the logical outcome of a technocratic, statist approach that removes class struggle and, therefore, transformation from the picture. The inability of the ANC discussion document to deal effectively with these matters is also highlighted by the way in which it conceptualises the ideological and programmatic basis of the ANC and its alliance.

It tells us: "the national liberation movement has, for 70 years, contained within itself **both a national democratic and a socialist tendency**" (3.4). This suggests that socialists in South Africa are not national democrats, and national democrats cannot be socialist.

By contrast, for instance, the ANC Youth League document usefully asserts that:

"The ANC as a broad national democratic movement incorporates a number of broad ideological trends, namely:

- a nationalist/bourgeois democratic trend;
- a socialist trend;
- the mainstream national democratic trend which tends to incorporate elements of both first two trends." (ANC Youth League, "Organisational and leadership issues in the ANC" para. 10.0)

In other words, the ANC YL document correctly understands that a national democratic perspective **unites** rather than **distinguishes** the main ideological currents within the ANC-led movement.

## Pragmatism without bounds

At the end of the day, the ANC discussion document has a profoundly defensive, balancing-act conception of the challenges facing us. Stability, for its own sake, starts to become the prime objective.

For instance, it tells us: "The instinct towards economism on the part of the ordinary workers [presumably the tendency of workers to make wage demands] has to be confronted through the positioning of the legitimate demands and expectations of these workers **within the wider context of the defence of the democratic gains as represented by the establishment of the democratic state.**" (para.6.10)

That we need to defend the April 1994 democratic breakthrough is absolutely correct. But, as our SACP 1995 9th Congress said in its slogan, we also have to Advance and Deepen the democratic breakthrough. The national democratic struggle is far from over. Working class struggles, and broader popular struggles, must be harnessed behind this much broader transformational effort.

At the beginning of this critique we said that we agreed with the document that we should avoid "voluntarism" - the illusion that we can simply do as we please. Obviously, there are huge constraints, massive challenges, and difficult choices to be made. But in attacking "voluntarism", the ANC discussion document seems to slide over to the flip-side of the coin - a total pragmatism.

The document quotes (coily and without direct acknowledgment) Engels' assertion that "freedom is the appreciation of necessity", but forgets that for Engels the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism were a necessity that required appreciation. Engels never gave the maxim the kind of passive, balancing-act meaning that the ANC discussion document imputes to it.

Near the beginning of the document it declares its hand very transparently. It tells us that "the true test of revolutionary practice is to be found in the ability to narrow to the minimum the gap between theory and reality" (para. 1.5). No - that is, and has always been, the slogan of opportunism, of narrow pragmatism and accommodationist politics. The true test of a revolutionary practice lies in the capacity of that practice to transform reality, actually, practically, so that reality actually embodies the revolutionary ideals (equality, justice, liberty, democracy) for which one is struggling.

That we have to be practical is absolutely true. But the kind of passive, regulatory pragmatism advocated by the ANC discussion document, especially in a society beset by huge inequalities, can only serve to legitimise and entrench those inequalities. The ANC discussion document has the title: "The State and Social Transformation". Its true title should have been: "The State and Social Accommodation".

From: <http://sacp.org.za/SACP/ac/ac146.html#transform>



## What is the National Democratic Revolution?

**Blade Nzimande, General Secretary, Umsebenzi Online, 18 October 2006**

"But an appraisal of a provisional revolutionary government's significance would be incomplete and wrong if the class nature of the democratic revolution were lost sight of. The (Congress) resolution therefore adds that a revolution will strengthen the rule of the bourgeoisie. This is inevitable under the present, i.e., capitalist, social and economic system. And the strengthening of the bourgeoisie's rule over the proletariat that has secured some measure of political liberty must inevitably lead to a desperate struggle between them for power, must lead to desperate attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie 'to take away from the proletariat the gains of the revolutionary period'. Therefore the proletariat, which is in the van of the struggle for democracy and heads that struggle, must not for a single moment forget the new antagonisms inherent in bourgeois democracy, or the new struggle" (Lenin, 'Two Tactics of Social Democracy', 1905)

We are citing Lenin's arguments above on his views about the transition from a repressive, authoritarian regime to a more democratic dispensation in Russia, not because we are equating our democratic government to Russia's provisional government. We are citing this quotation to illustrate that questions of this nature do not face communists or liberation struggles for the first time, but they go back a long way, and have pre-occupied Marxists for a long time.

One critical issue that has emerged as a significant area of difference within our Alliance in the debates, since the release of the SACP Central Committee Discussion Document, is our understanding of the concept of the national democratic revolution (NDR), the motive forces and 'policy package' of such revolution in contemporary South African, and the manner in which the various class forces have positioned themselves in the national democratic revolution, especially since the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

This edition aims to briefly surface and pose some questions around the critical issues that need to be explored as this debate unfolds, as part of a contribution towards deepening our understanding of the challenges of the NDR in contemporary South Africa. This debate is also important in providing the context within which to take forward the work of the Central Committee Commission.

It might as well be that what is fundamental in Lenin's observation should be a reminder to the working class that 'transitions' to democracy, welcome and important as they are in the struggle for socialism, are however characterized by a combination of both old and new class antagonisms and this requires vigilance on the part of the working class and its formations.

In our messages to the COSATU Congress, we argued that the main content of the class struggles underway in society, as manifested in contemporary debates both inside and outside of our movement, is the direction that our democratic revolution should take, capitalist or a socialist orientation. We argued at this congress, as we had always done, that a national democratic revolution with a capitalist orientation ceases to be an NDR.

Clearly from our last bilateral with the ANC through to President Mbeki's political overview to the October 2006 ANC National Executive Committee meeting, divergent views on the NDR have become self-evident. It is indeed possible that the emergence of the question of the SACP's relation to state power, including considerations of contesting elections in our own right, emanates from concerns within our ranks about the content and direction of the national democratic revolution since the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

The character, content and direction of the NDR are of fundamental importance to our alliance, since the deepening and consolidating the national democratic revolution is the glue that holds our Alliance together. It is therefore of utmost importance that we continue to debate these matters.

For the SACP, especially since the adoption of the Native Republic Thesis of 1928 ('A struggle for a native republic as a stage towards a socialist South Africa'), we had always understood the national democratic revolution as the most direct route to socialism. The latter perspective was fully elaborated in our 1962 programme, 'The Road to South African Freedom'.

The concept of a 'national democratic revolution' emerged from within Marxism-Leninism in its analysis of the unfolding national liberation struggles in the 20th century. The NDR has historically been understood as a revolution led by progressive motive forces (mainly oppressed and exploited) to defeat repressive and colonial regimes and build people's democracies, as both an objective in itself, but in circumstances also where, due to domestic or global balance of forces, such a revolution is unable to immediately proceed to socialism. This could be because the motive forces are either not strong or conscious enough to drive the revolution towards socialism or other objective factors pose a limitation to a transition to socialism.

The above was indeed the SACP understanding of the NDR which was nevertheless shared by many inside the ANC itself. This however did not mean that the SACP had conceived the NDR merely as a stepping stone or an 'instrument' towards socialism. The SACP has always understood and accepted that the very immediate objectives of the NDR - the liberation of blacks in general and Africans in particular, and the building of a non-racial and non-sexist society - were important objectives in themselves. It is for this reason that, contrary to the arguments of our left and right detractors, the Alliance is still important, since the main objectives of the NDR have not been achieved, despite progress made since the 1994 democratic breakthrough.

At the same time the SACP has consistently and correctly argued that the national and gender contradictions cannot be fully resolved under the national democratic revolution, as this can only happen if the revolution proceeds to socialism. It is for this reason that we have approached the challenge of consolidating and deepening of the NDR from the perspective of our strategic slogan 'Socialism is the Future, Built it Now'.

For the ANC, a perspective also shared by the SACP, the national democratic revolution meant the achievement of a non-racial, non-sexist and prosperous society. In addition the ANC, much as it might not have shared all the perspectives of the NDR as articulated by the SACP, had always been understanding of the SACP's perspectives in this regard.

The Alliance shared the perspective that much as the NDR was not a socialist revolution, but it was not a struggle for capitalism either. This shared perspective was deepened through the adoption of the Freedom Charter in 1995, which, whilst not a socialist document, envisaged a radical transformation of society including major restructuring of the capitalist system itself in favour of the overwhelming majority of our people. This shared perspective was also strengthened by the ANC's commitment to a working class bias as captured in the Morogoro Conference as well as what is contained in the 'Green Book', which our discussion document refers to.

There are now seemingly emerging differences within (and perhaps within each components of) our Alliance. For instance, the ANC NWC response to our discussion document argues that the task of the ANC (and by implication the NDR) is to manage capitalist relations, and further argues that:

"In other words, the NDR is called such, with national and democratic tasks, because it seeks to deal with the political and socio-economic manifestations of apartheid colonialism. This includes addressing the issue of property relations - in a manner, as indicated above, elaborated in (the Alliance document) 'The State, Property Relations

and Social Transformation'. As this succeeds, new challenges will emerge, and the ANC would then have to define its place and role in the new milieu.

"While the motive forces strive to change elements of the capitalist system in the interest of the NDR, they have to manage the capitalist system in line with the main elements of its own logic"

It can be argued that indeed there is a lot new in some of these arguments and formulations. In our view, and this is indeed shared by many in the ANC, the NDR, as also encapsulated in its principal programme - the Freedom Charter - was never meant to deal just with 'political and socio-economic manifestations of apartheid colonialism'. The NDR, in our view is a radical programme to transform the very structural foundations of these apartheid 'manifestations'.

Neither was the NDR meant to 'manage the capitalist system in line with the main elements of its own logic'. Firstly it is unclear what this phrase means, and it is completely new in the vocabulary of our movement. In my view, such an argument is for an NDR that wholly embraces a capitalist path. An immediate question that comes to mind is whether such a formulation is not meant as a post facto justification for the pursuance of capitalist profitability as the main thrust of our economic policies especially since the adoption of GEAR in 1996?

In the light of the above there are a number of questions that need to be posed and answered, some of which include the following:

- Could it be that within our own movement, and certainly in broader society, there is in essence a contest over whether the NDR has a capitalist or socialist orientation? The SACP is arguing for a socialist oriented NDR as the only form that will ensure that indeed our revolution is able to achieve its objectives. The last twelve years of our democracy has taught us that pursuing restoration of capitalist profitability has, in class terms, benefited the bourgeoisie and the middle classes, despite the massive government resource transfers to the poor.
- Arising from the above, a related question is whether contemporary struggles are not a reflection of a struggle between pursuance of a socialist oriented NDR and a struggle to co-opt and transform the NDR into a full-blown bourgeois democracy with the bourgeoisie (black and white) at the helm of such a project? But is it possible to even create a sustainable bourgeois democracy in our country in the light of the massive inequalities daily reproduced by the capitalist system?

- Another key question that has emerged, especially in the context of our engagement with the ANC, is whether it is indeed possible anymore to pursue a socialist oriented NDR in the post Soviet era? Was such an NDR perhaps only possible during the existence of the Soviet socialist bloc of countries which acted as a counter to the designs of the imperialist world? Could this be the reason why some in our movement are today talking about the aim of the NDR being to 'manage the capitalist system in line with main elements of its own logic'?
- Posed differently, what should be the strategy and tactics of pursuing a socialist oriented NDR in a unipolar, imperialist world dominated by the US?
- Has an NDR ever proceeded to socialism under bourgeois-type multi party democracies? Has it not been the case in 20th century national democratic revolutions that such revolutions have only proceeded to socialism only immediately after the victory over repressive regimes, and not under conditions of open electoral contests in bourgeois democratic type dispensations? Is it inevitable that in today's unipolar world national democratic revolutions can only be co-opted and transformed into bourgeois democratic dispensations after a democratic breakthrough like ours. For instance what can we, learn from Allende's Chile of the 1970s and Chavez' Venezuela of 2006?

In order to answer these and many other related questions, it is important that we take forward the debates from our Special National Congress in 2005 on class, national and gender struggles in the NDR, in the wake of the 1994 democratic breakthrough. It will especially require deepening our analysis on the class formation and class struggles since 1994, and the implications of these for a socialist-oriented NDR.

This debate will also have to be taken further by undertaking a thorough analysis of national democratic revolutions in the 20th century. Such an analysis must include analysing those national democratic revolutions that immediately proceeded to socialism; as well as those which were aborted and transformed into bourgeois democracies of one form or another. For instance what is it that enabled the Chinese, Cuban and Vietnamese national democratic revolutions to proceed immediately towards the building of socialism, whilst those of India, Mozambique, Angola, for instance degenerated away from socialism?

In addition to our conception of the NDR, we need to begin to outline what we mean, in concrete terms, by working class leadership of the NDR, and what should be the real indicators of such a leadership and hegemony in current conditions.

Perhaps a matter we need to interrogate further is that of the nature of class struggles, continuities and discontinuities, in the period prior to ascendancy to state power, and the period thereafter. A related question here is that of the nature of such struggles and the attitude of the liberation movement towards such struggles, in a situation where the NDR is led by a multi-class liberation movement as opposed to a revolution directly led by a Communist Party? To what extent had the SACP programmes prior to 1994 anticipated the nature and character of class struggles in the period after the democratic breakthrough?

Of course our Party has had a lot to say on all the above questions and others over the last 12 years. We however need to approach these in a much more systematic way, especially as we approach our 12th Congress next year.

Much as these theoretical debates are necessary, we should however not endlessly engage in these debates without at the same time building working class power in all key sites of influence in order to ensure the hegemony of the working class and winning a socialist oriented NDR on the ground.

We should also consciously seek to engage these issues in the major platforms of our Alliance. For instance the ANC is in the process of drafting a new 'Strategy and Tactics' document in preparation for its 2007 National Conference, and we should use this platform to further engage on these matters. Furthermore the forthcoming ANC National Policy Conference as well as our own 12th Congress in the same year should be seen as important platforms to take forward these matters.

We invite our comrades in the Party and in the movement as a whole to also use this publication to take forward all these debates.

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